

Memorandum

STATE OF WISCONSIN
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



Date: September 30, 2005

To: District Administrators

From: David Carlson
School Financial Services Director

Michael Bormett
Policy and Budget Director

Subject: Reporting of Students Displaced by Hurricane Katrina

On behalf of State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster, we would like to thank you for your ongoing efforts over the past month to serve students and their families who have been displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

While the number of families relocating to Wisconsin as a result of the hurricane was not as large as had been initially projected, we know that districts throughout Wisconsin have been enrolling students. The federal government is aware that most states are enrolling displaced students, with the majority of them being served in the states surrounding Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. In response to this large relocation, President Bush has proposed a funding plan for public school districts to reimburse them for the costs of serving these students and their families. In addition, several members of Congress have forwarded their own proposals to fund education costs for displaced students. These proposals are being debated and it is hoped that a funding package will be approved in the near future.

We at the Department of Public Instruction want to know how many displaced students are being served by our school districts. In addition, this information will be needed by the federal Department of Education to help them target whatever level of new education aid might be made available. Also at the national level, the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers are looking for data from all states to assess the impact of Hurricane Katrina on schools and school districts.

We were not able to modify the department's third Friday count reporting software in time to reflect a means to account for students enrolled as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Therefore, we are sending you this letter asking you to provide that information via email to the department. We are asking you to please report to us the number of displaced students that you have enrolled. At a minimum, we need a single number from each of our 426 districts, even if that number is

zero. Ideally, we would also appreciate having a breakdown of where the students came from – Louisiana, Mississippi or Alabama – as well as the grade levels of the students.

We understand and appreciate that you do not need another separate data request. However, Hurricane Katrina has presented all of us with unique challenges. Most importantly, **this information is going to be critical in helping assure that school districts in Wisconsin have the greatest access to any additional federal funds that may be made available.**

How to Report Displaced Students Enrolled due to Hurricane Katrina

Send an email to Michael.Bornett@dpi.state.wi.us. Please include, at a minimum, the number of displaced students you have enrolled in your district. If possible, please include any other demographic information that you can, as suggested above. We would appreciate receiving your email reply by Monday, October 10th.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this important request. If you have questions, please contact either one of us: David Carlson (608-266-6968) or Michael Bornett (608-266-2804).